

VETERANS HEALTH CARE BUDGET
REFORM AND TRANSPARENCY
ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, June 23, 2009

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker. I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1016, "Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act of 2009." I would like to thank my colleague, Congressman BOB FILNER, for introducing this bill, and providing leadership on this important issue.

Today I will defer to Thomas Jefferson who so auspiciously stated, "The care of human life and happiness and not their destruction is the first and only legitimate object of good government." We must call attention as both the House and Senate discuss health care reform. Today, in the midst of two wars and an economic crisis, I know in this 111th Congress and with the 44th President of the United States, our government is now in the position of necessity where we must work to ensure comprehensive health care reform to all citizens.

The Veterans Health Care Budget Reform and Transparency Act of 2009 will ensure that one community who gave the ultimate measure for their country will have a quality health care system. I urge members of Congress to put away the partisan bickering and come together to support those who have given their lives for the country they love. There should be no reason why our veterans should not receive the adequate health care they deserve.

For 19 out of the past 22 fiscal years, appropriated funds for medical care were not provided to the Department of Veterans Affairs before the commencement of its new fiscal year, causing the Department great challenges in planning and managing care for enrolled veterans. Appropriation levels for health care programs in the Department have too often proven insufficient over the past decade, requiring the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to ration health care and Congress to approve supplemental appropriations. Medical technology available on the battlefields and in U.S. medical facilities are saving the lives of a high percentage of severely wounded soldiers, but they then often face long-term recovery and rehabilitation challenges.

By providing sufficient, timely and predictable funding we would ensure that we meet the vital obligation to provide health care to all veterans. Congress must take action in ensuring our veterans who return home sick, injured, or even healthy will receive the quality health care they deserve. As Congress begins to swiftly act in an unprecedented time, I urge my colleagues to put away partisan bickering and act as a single non-partisan government to ensure our citizens' happiness in a quality health care system.

EARMARK DECLARATION

HON. ROBERT E. LATTA

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 26, 2009

Mr. LATTA. Madam Speaker, pursuant to the Republican Leadership standards on ear-

marks, I am submitting the following information for publication in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD regarding earmarks I received as part of H.R. 2996, the Fiscal Year 2010 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act.

Requesting Member: Congressman ROBERT E. LATTA

Bill Number: H.R. 2996, Fiscal Year 2010 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act

Account: EPA; STAG Water and Wastewater Infrastructure Project

Legal Name of Requesting Entity: Village of Tiro, Ohio

Address of Requesting Entity: P.O. Box 31, Tiro, OH 44887

Description of Request: \$500,000 for the Village of Tiro Water Distribution System. This project consists of purchasing treated water from the City of Shelby and transporting it to Tiro via 32,500 ft. of water main. 10,700 ft. of water main will be constructed in the Village for distribution of water. A booster pumping station, storage tower, and fire hydrants will be included. The Village of Tiro currently has no municipal water system. Water is collected or hauled into shallow wells or cisterns. The Village has tried for several years to secure a source of water and funding. The current project is the closest this village has come for a safe water supply. I certify that neither I nor my spouse has any financial interest in this project.

TRIBUTE TO FRANCISCO "PACO"
SALDANA

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 26, 2009

Mr. CRENSHAW. Madam Speaker. I rise today to congratulate one of my constituents Francisco "Paco" Saldana who as the Director of Guest Services, The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island is the winner of the "Faces of Travel" award granted on an annual basis by the U.S. Travel Association to an employee in the travel business who exemplifies the travel industry and what makes it a unique employment opportunity for 7.7 million Americans.

After months of searching and thousands of votes by industry members, Francisco "Paco" Saldana, a resident of Fernandina Beach, Florida, will be announced as the winner of the "Faces of Travel Contest."

As the winner of this award, Francisco "Paco" Saldana who is a proud employee at the Ritz-Carlton on Amelia Island will help communicate the critical role travel plays in the lives of working Americans across our great country.

Mr. Saldana is the embodiment of the American Dream and what is possible in this great land of opportunity, having emigrated to the United States in 1995 from Mexico City and rising up the ranks at The Ritz-Carlton. Mr. Saldana's dedication to hard work and his positive attitude over the last 14 years have propelled him to become the Director of Guest Services.

Mr. Saldana's work in the travel industry not only had a positive impact on his professional life, but also his personal life. Mr. Saldana met his wife, Christina, who also happened to work

at The Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island. They were married in September 2002. Mr. and Mrs. Saldana have three children, Isabella Grace, Nikolas Valentino and Sophia Claire.

SUPPORT OF: H.R. 1511, THE "TORTURE VICTIMS RELIEF REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2009"

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 26, 2009

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I support H.R. 1511, the "Torture Victims Relief Reauthorization Act of 2009." This bill was sponsored by Representative CHRISTOPHER SMITH of New Jersey. The bill's purpose is to amend the Torture Victims Relief Act of 1998 to authorize appropriations for FY2010-FY2011 which will provide assistance for domestic and foreign programs and centers for the treatment of victims of torture. I support this bill and I urge my colleagues to support this bill as it provides needed rehabilitation treatment to those who have been impacted by the effects of torture.

H.R. 1511, the Torture Victims Relief Reauthorization Act of 2009, authorizes appropriations for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to provide grants to programs in the United States to cover the costs of services provided by domestic treatment centers in the rehabilitation of victims of torture (including treatment of the physical and psychological effects of torture). It will also allow the centers to provide social and legal services as well as research and training of health care providers outside of treatment centers or programs to enable them to provide such services. It authorizes the President to provide grants to treatment centers and programs in foreign countries that carry out projects and activities specifically designed to treat victims of torture for the physical and psychological effects of torture. In addition, it provides grants to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture.

This bill is not only important, it is necessary. The Abu Ghraib prisoner abuse scandal and the myriad of consequential allegations of prisoner abuse across both Iraq and Afghanistan have cast a heavy shadow over our role in Iraq and our country as a whole. Under the Bush Administration, evidence indicates that torture was conducted on prisoners which included methods such as: waterboarding, weeklong sleep deprivation, forced nudity, use of painful positions, belly-slap and the exploitation of prisoner's fears of animals or insects. President Obama has since denounced these inhumane integration practices and has vowed that the United States does not condone torture. H.R. 1511 supports the President's vow by providing treatment to victims which is designed to enable the victim to step back from the trauma, learn to identify and accept it and gradually become reintegrated into society and/or the working world. This treatment will also serve a social purpose in that it will enable the victim to restore ties that were severed by an array of clinical symptoms caused by being tortured.

In the wake of the Abu Ghraib scandal, the U.S. has gone to great pains to persuade the world that U.S. policy does not condone torture. If Congress enacts this legislation, it